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# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جوردان تلغيم يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية "الراي"

## India nationalises six private banks

NEW DELHI, April 15 (AP) — Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's government, in one of its most decisive acts since Mrs. Gandhi returned to power last January, today nationalised six of India's remaining private banks. The most affected banks are the Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, the New Bank of India, the Oriental Bank of Commerce, the Punjab and Sind Bank and Vijaya Bank. President Sanjiva Reddy signed the ordinance after a meeting of the cabinet earlier in the day decided on the nationalisation. The government said that the total assets of the banks exceeded 23,560 million rupees (about \$2,945 million). It said that new bank directors and other executives would be appointed soon and promised there would be no layoffs. Numerous smaller banks still remain in private hands. Under the Indian constitution, the president is empowered to issue ordinances when parliament is not in session provided he is convinced of the need to take such action. However, he cannot act unilaterally, but only on the advice of the prime minister.

## Israel's inflation rate set at 120%

PIED JERUSALEM, April 15 (R)—Israel's cost of living rose by 5.1 per cent last March, bringing the annual inflation rate to 120.4 per cent, the Central Bureau of Statistics announced today. Most of the increase was attributed to prices of food and clothing, the bureau said. Finance Minister Yigael Hurvitz said that the March figure, following the February of 4.9 per cent and 7.3 per cent in January, was the nation's previous runaway inflation was now being tamed at a lower rate. "It is still by no means what we are used to but much better than the previous rate of over 150 per cent," Mr. Hurvitz told reporters. He admitted that the rise sharply this month as a result of expected new hikes in prices of petrol and electricity.

## Regional Briefs

PIED JERUSALEM, April 15 (R)—Prime Minister Menachem Begin's popularity has continued to decline according to a public opinion poll published here today. One per cent of those polled in March regarded Mr. Begin as the best suited to be prime minister, a drop of three per cent from the January poll. Recent public opinion surveys showed that the Labour Party would win an absolute majority in the next general elections were held now. But the latest poll, out by the Modlin Ezrahi Applied Research Centre for the Israel Post said that Labour leader Shimon Peres trailed behind Mr. Begin in popularity with 17.6 per cent backing government leader.

PIED JERUSALEM, April 15 (R)—Israelis and Egyptians drive their own cars to visit each other's country from the transport ministry announced. Israelis with tourist international driving licences and valid insurance certificates can cross the border point at Al Arish in northern Sinai to be given temporary Egyptian licence plates. The agreement was worked out at a recent meeting of a committee for normalisation of relations between the two countries. Last year's peace treaty. Egyptian-Israeli tourism has so far been limited to organised tours. Meanwhile, Israeli Assistant Minister Abraham Tamir held talks in Cairo today with Egyptian Minister of Transport Taha Magdoub on progress made on normalisation. Magdoub and Mr. Tamir are members of a joint committee at defence ministers level, assigned to deal with all of normalising relations between the two countries. Magdoub said a comprehensive report on normalisation would be sent to the commission, when it meets later this month.

AIT, April 15 (AP)—Kuwait today pledged a further \$30 million towards the development of the Senegal River basin, bringing its total contribution to the project, President Senghor of Senegal announced here before departure in the day. The announcement came at the end of two days of talks between Mr. Senghor and the Mali President Moussa Traore. The Senegal Basin Organisation, grouping Mali, Mauritania and Senegal, has so far secured contributions of \$550 million from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United States, France and West Germany. "We have to obtain a \$250 million to meet the financing of the project," Mr. Senghor added. He said the organisation received a promise from Kuwait to contribute \$75 million to the project's first stage.

JT, April 15 (R)—Palestinian Commandos will fight with against any U.S. military intervention, spokesman Majed Sharar said here today. Mr. Abu Sharar, in charge of unified information, was commenting on U.S. threats to use other methods to release hostages at the American Embassy in Tehran. "We shall fight against America and the heroic Iranian people," he said in a press statement. He said the Palestinian commando movement would support the Iranian revolution "as a strategic ally in the struggle against imperialism and Zionism."

AIT, April 15 (AP)—British Foreign Trade Minister Cecil Gordon arrived here today to discuss expansion of trade between Britain and Kuwait. Sources here said Britain is mainly interested in increasing its exports to Kuwait, including advanced equipment, and participating in the establishment of a million polytechnic institute in Kuwait. Mr. Parkinson is also expected to discuss the recent reduction of crude oil sales to Kuwait from 450,000 barrels a day to 75,000 barrels a day. According to the new contract signed with BP on April 1, Kuwait would be able to buy another 75,000 barrels of crude oil at \$33 a barrel, which is \$5.5 more than the official oil price.

IAH, April 15 (R)—Saudi Arabia's first library for women was opened last night in the capital of Riyadh. The library, headed by Prince Fahd bin Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, deputy minister of labour and social affairs, also provides a telephone information service on cultural and scientific matters. It has an annex for children and is equipped with modern educational facilities. Arabia opened four banks for women only last month.

AIT, April 15 (AP)—Denmark's energy minister, Mr. Paul Jensen, conferred today with Kuwait's crown prince and prime minister, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah. He also held talks with oil minister, Sheikh Ali Khalifa Al Sabah. A government spokesman said Mr. Nielsen's talks with Kuwaiti leaders centred on aspects of supplying Denmark with Kuwaiti crude oil and direct deals between the two governments. The talks also touched on the possibility of expanding trade between the two countries, the sources added. Mr. Nielsen arrived here on a tour from Abu Dhabi for a 3-day official visit in the course of a tour. He left later for home.

ANA, April 15 (R)—Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov will visit Syria in the second half of April, the Syrian News Agency BTA reported today.

## SCF decides to form joint military force

TRIPOLI, April 15 (Agencies)—Five headline Arab leaders today announced the creation of a joint military force to be stationed in Syria.

They made the announcement at the end of a three-day summit meeting of leaders representing Syria, Algeria, South Yemen, the Libyan Jamahiriya, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

They said details of the proposed force would be worked out in the next six months. They gave no indication of its intended size but said it would have a Syrian commander.

The five leaders, who jointly form the "Steadfastness and Confrontation Front" opposed to Egypt's peace with Israel, also entrusted Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi with deepening the grouping's relations with the Soviet bloc, and particularly Moscow.

The called on Jordan to help the front in its confrontation with Israel and announced the formation of four liaison committees in the military, political, cultural and information fields.

Conference sources said that the front was aiming at the creation of an alternative to the U.S.-sponsored Camp David peace accords between Israel and Egypt.

The final statement brushed aside differences between Libya and the PLO and announced the reopening of the organisation's office in the Libyan capital. It said any differences were of a secondary nature.

The PLO bureau in Tripoli was closed down when Col. Qadhafi expelled the organisation's representative here as part of a simmering row with the Palestinian leadership over how radical they should be.

"It's not a step forward, it's a leap forward," commented one Arab diplomat on the outcome of the summit. But he added that the front agreed to establish a joint military command at a previous summit in September, 1978, and this never had been carried out.

A Libyan spokesman said yesterday that Col. Qadhafi and Algerian President Chadli Ben Jedid had agreed in principle to ban the sale of oil and natural gas to Washington but that details still had to be worked out.



Andrew's Air Force Base, Md. — Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin meets U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance for a brief arrival ceremony here Monday. Begin's meetings with President Carter are expected to focus on self-rule for Palestinians. (AP Laserphoto)

## Red Cross officials report

## Tehran hostages in good health, their food supplies are sufficient

GENEVA, April 15 (Agencies)—One of two International Red Cross representatives who visited "one by one" all the American hostages in the U.S. embassy in Tehran said Tuesday they found their health to be rather good and their food supplies sufficient.

Dr. Bernard Liebeskind, a Geneva physician, talked to reporters as he arrived at Geneva Airport from Iran carrying a bagful of personal messages from the Americans, now in their 164th day of captivity.

Dr. Liebeskind and Mr. Harald Schmid de Gruneeck, the Red Cross chief delegate in Tehran, spent more than nine hours with the hostages Monday in the first visit to all of the captives by independent observers.

Shortly after Dr. Liebeskind returned, the Red Cross began preparing the messages for telexing from Geneva headquarters to its mission at the United Nations in New York. Red Cross spokesman Michelle Mercier said: "Our people there will then telephone the families. This will make sure they get them as fast as possible."

Both men were able to speak to "all hostages one by one" but agreed not to disclose their total number, Ms. Mercier said. She said this had been a condition set by the militants who took over the embassy Nov. 4 before they agreed to the Red Cross visit. U.S. authorities have said there are 50 hostages in the embassy and three in the foreign ministry.

Mr. Schmid de Gruneeck said he was convinced he saw all the hostages "without any exception." He said he discussed the conditions of their detention with their captors and "suggested some improvements. I can only hope there will be some results." But he declined to be specific about his recommendations.

Hojatoleslam Mohammad Mousavi Khoeini, the spiritual leader of the militants, told reporters in Tehran the captors would be willing to allow visits by the hostages' families if President Jimmy Carter would not try to make propaganda out of the visits. He said Mr. Carter's words and his use of the hostage issue in the American presidential campaign "raised obstacles" to such visits.

White House National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski quoted "credible reports" Monday and reported the Soviet Union had moved military forces into the area north of Iran. He gave no figures, in a television interview, but said the Soviet troops were in the Transcaucasus area.

Mr. Brzezinski said the activity is similar to the Soviet buildup last December that preceded the Russian occupation of Afghanistan.

U.S. Defence Department officials said Tuesday a combat force of Russian marines had arrived in the Indian Ocean for the first time. The officials said at least 400 men were aboard Russia's biggest amphibious assault ship, the 13,000-ton Ivan Rogov.

The Rogov's decks were reported packed with personnel carriers, helicopters and other equipment used to support a landing force, the Pentagon officials said. There was no indication what the Russians will do with the men, the officials said.

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## But not in Washington Begin proposes non-stop autonomy talks with Egypt

WASHINGTON, April 15 (Agencies)—Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin suggested today that Egyptian and Israeli negotiating teams

on Palestinian autonomy hold non-stop meetings in an effort to conclude an accord by their May 26 goal, Israeli sources said.

The suggestion was made at a two-hour White House meeting between the Israeli premier, who arrived here yesterday for a two-day visit, and President Carter. The aim of the summit was to discuss speeding up the Palestinian autonomy talks.

No statement was issued after the meeting. President Carter and Mr. Begin were to confer again later tonight.

But Mr. Begin insisted that the talks on self-rule for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank of Jordan and the Gaza Strip be held in Tel Aviv, Israel, and Alexandria, Egypt, instead of in Washington as Mr. Carter and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat had agreed last week, the sources said.

U.S. officials reacted more coolly to the idea. They said earlier that meetings in Tel Aviv and Alexandria had not brought the desired progress and it would be very difficult to have intense U.S. involvement away from Washington.

But they said the venue of the talks would not be a major hold-up, and the important thing was to achieve progress on matters of substance.

Israeli sources said that Mr. Begin noted to the president that

there were only 40 days between tomorrow and May 26, the target date for an agreement to give self-rule for Palestinians on the West Bank and in Gaza.

Talks could be held for 20 days in Tel Aviv and 20 days in Alexandria, the Israeli sources said.

U.S. and Egyptian officials had favoured holding the intensified talks in Washington, partly so that President Carter could play an active role as he did during the Israeli-Egyptian peace negotiations in autumn, 1978, and spring, 1979.

In addition, the officials said it would help speed up the talks if they were held away from the constant distractions that occur at a Middle East site. But Israeli cabinet members objected to the Washington venue.

Some U.S. officials said in their personal opinion, the Israelis wanted to avoid any appearance of bowing to U.S. pressure.

## Pro-Iraq gunmen, Shi'ite Muslims exchange automatic fire in Beirut

BEIRUT, April 15 (R)—Several people were wounded today when Muslim militants and pro-Iraqi gunmen exchanged automatic weapons fire during a strike in protest against the reported disappearance of a religious leader in Iraq, security sources said.

They had no details on the exact number of casualties in clashes between armed members of Lebanon's Shi'ite Muslim community and supporters of the Baath Party which rules Iraq.

The strike was called by Shi'ite community leaders in Lebanon following reports that a prominent Shi'ite cleric, Ayatollah Mohammad Bakir Al Sadr, had disappeared from his home in the Shi'ite holy city of Najaf, south of Baghdad. Several Iranian newspapers reported that the ayatollah had been murdered, but informed Iranian sources in Tehran today quoted Arab diplomats as saying the religious leader had been taken to Baghdad by Iraqi security forces and was alive.

Virtually all shops and most schools were closed in the western sector of Beirut. Demonstrators blocked a number of roads with barriers of blazing tyres but later dispersed.

Iran and Iraq have been locked in bitter conflict over a number of issues, including statements by

Iranian leaders that the Islamic revolution which brought Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to power was for export. Just over half of Iraq's population is Shi'ite.

At the Iraqi embassy in Beirut, a security man at a first-floor balcony trained a rocket launcher at the entrance to the embassy compound. Heavily-armed guards festooned with bandoliers of spare ammunition patrolled the embassy building and the reception desk was manned by an embassy member dressed in battle fatigues, a Kalashnikov assault rifle at the ready.

Yesterday, two bomb explosions ripped through the Iraqi compound centre and the office of Iraq's state-run airways but there were no casualties.

Responsibility for the blast was claimed by an organisation which called itself "Iraqi Mujahideen" which earlier this month said it had been behind a grenade attack in Baghdad on one of the closest associates of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Deputy Premier Tareq Aziz.

Meanwhile, Iran's charge d'affaires in Beirut told the Lebanese foreign ministry today that Iranian Foreign Minister Sadeq Ootbadeh would visit Lebanon next week. No precise date or reason for his visit was given.

## Islamic press, ICO, Arab League protest 'Death of a Princess' film

From combined news agencies' reports

The general secretariat of the Islamic press will file a suit against Britain's Independent Television Company over the film "Death of a Princess" charging it with malicious attacks against Islam and Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi Arabian newspaper Arab News Tuesday quoted the secretariat's assistant general, Sheikh Ali Hafiz, as saying that no date had been set for filing the suit. However, he said that proceedings would be taken in London soon.

The film, shown on Britain's Independent Television network last week, attempted to reconstruct the case of Princess Misha, executed by firing squad for adultery in November 1977, and her commoner lover who was beheaded.

The film has been denounced by Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries as sensation-seeking fiction and an attack on the religion of Islam.

Sheikh Ali, who sent a protest telegram to British Ambassador James Craig, said the film was a "deliberate affront against Muslim beliefs and Islamic principles."

"We used to believe the British society respected the beliefs and values of other societies," the telegram said.

The Australian government Tuesday asked the Independent Television Network (Channel 7) not to screen the controversial film. Acting Prime Minister Doug Anthony told the network that showing the film would damage Australia's relations with Saudi Arabia, including trade worth 500 million Australian dollars (\$550 million) annually.

Mr. Anthony told parliament the film was grossly offensive to the Saudi Arabian government and the Saudi royal family.

The Saudi Arabian ambassador in The Hague was quoted Tuesday as saying his country's trade with the Netherlands would not suffer if Dutch television went ahead and showed the film.

The Dutch Broadcasting Foundation Tuesday postponed a decision on whether to show the film.

A lower board of the Netherlands Broadcasting Foundation agreed Tuesday that the film should be shown Wednesday night on Dutch television.

But the lower board tossed the final decision to the controlling board of the Dutch television system, which said it would decide Wednesday afternoon, just hours before the scheduled broadcast.

A senior Swedish Television producer said Tuesday Swedish Television would like to show the film.

Mr. Lennart Ehrenborg said in Stockholm he would go to an international television programme buying meeting in Cannes on Thursday to negotiate for the film.

Asked if he were concerned about Saudi retaliation, Mr. Ehrenborg said: "Under the rules of our agreement with the Swedish government any complaints could be considered only after the film is screened, not before."

Sweden imports about 32 per cent of its oil from Saudi Arabia. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the 42-nation Islamic Conference Organisation have also denounced the television film.

The official Saudi Press Agency said that Information Minister Mohammad Abdo Yamani received a telegram from UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Ahmad Bin Ahmad Monday denouncing the film and calling for "measures sufficient to counteract this slanderous attack."

The Islamic Conference Organisation, in a statement reported by the Saudi agency, said this was not the first time Muslims had been exposed to "this conspiracy woven and supervised by Israel" and it called for "intensive efforts in the framework of a studied information campaign to present the true picture of the religion of Islam."

Mr. Chadli Klibi, secretary general of the 22-member Arab League told Reuters as he headed a six-nation Gulf tour: "It is sad, especially when we are about to restart the Euro-Arab dialogue with a group of peoples we regard as friends of the Arabs, that the new atmosphere should be disturbed by a film insulting to Islam."

In Washington, the non-commercial Public Broadcasting System (PBS) said Tuesday American television viewers can see the film next month.

The government-subsidised PBS said each of the 283 stations on its network would decide for themselves on screening the programme when it was carried on May 12.



ma citizens crowd downtown streets as they protest against refugees attempting to leave through the Peruvian embassy. An estimated 10 Cubans have been jammed in the Peruvian embassy for several days seeking asylum. U.S. President Jimmy Carter announced Monday he would allow 3,500 Cubans to enter the United States on humanitarian grounds. See story page 6.



# Jordan Times

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## Radical chic

THE UNSPEAKABLE Dr. Henry Kissinger, his hopes of once again ruling the world dashed by Mr. Gerald Ford's apparent non-availability for the Republican Party presidential nomination, has nevertheless delivered himself of the view that a Palestinian state would be a "disaster".

Addressing the American Committee of Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science Dr. Kissinger is reported to have expressed horror at the prospect of an independent Palestinian state under the leadership of the PLO on the grounds that "the Middle East does not need another radical state".

Dr. Kissinger's use of the term "radical" is instructive. The word is often used, particularly in the United States, to mean "militant" or "extremist" or just plain "unpleasant". This, of course, is a corruption of its original meaning, which Professor Kissinger should be well aware of. In its true sense, "radical" pertains to the "root" or "origin" of something. So, in fact, while expressing his fear and loathing of the Palestinians, Dr. Kissinger has put his finger on it: the Palestine problem is the root of the Middle East problem as a whole; the uprooting of the Palestinians from their homeland and the denial of their God-given right to national self-expression is the origin of the Arab-Zionist conflict.

What Dr. Kissinger should ponder is that, more than any other factor, America's military, moral and economic support of Israel has facilitated, underwritten and nourished that uprooting and that denial. If there are any radicals (in the Kissinger sense) among the Palestinians, they are the creation of United States policy, including that evolved under Dr. Kissinger's custodianship.

And new Kissingerian "radicals" are born every day, and will continue to be born until the Palestinians can once again establish themselves as free human beings with full human dignity in their usurped homeland.

History, at least in the Twentieth Century when the United States has been the dominant Western power, has chosen to single out this people, alone among all the peoples in the world, as somehow not being worthy of that freedom and that dignity. Is it not understandable, therefore, to Dr. Kissinger, as a Jew and an American, that such a denial should make those people bitter -- which is to say "radical"?

The Palestinians are engaged in a struggle against the type of manipulation at which Dr. Kissinger is a practised expert. Only when that struggle has won them their rights -- their freedom, their dignity, their homeland, their state -- will Dr. Kissinger's nightmares about radicalism be laid to rest.

## ARAB PRESS COMMENTARY

AL RA'I: U.S. President Carter and Israeli Premier Menachem Begin are scheduled to meet in Washington to discuss the local autonomy plan. The U.S. president is going ahead with these meetings and negotiations, which aim at denying the freedom of the Palestinian people and challenging the international community's will, while at the same time he appeals to that same community to join the U.S. in imposing political and economic sanctions against Iran to force the freeing of the American hostages.

Naturally, this comparison is not meant as a justification of the continued hostage siege, but simply to show the moral contradiction in U.S. policy. The administration has no patience with the holding of the American hostages -- a matter of a few months -- but it does not want the European group or anybody else to take any further steps towards releasing the Palestinian people, who have been the hostages of Israeli occupation for many years.

Will the European community try to make Washington understand the degree of contradiction in undertaking a U.S.-European action -- diplomatic or economic -- for the sake of the American hostages and maintaining the status quo of the American-European stand towards the Palestinians? Or will the European group satisfy Washington by its actions and tell the Arabs to make do with mere talk? The answers to these questions will be revealed in the next few days.

AL DUSTOUR: Any observer witnessing the Egyptian-Israeli negotiations must arrive at the inevitable conclusion -- that is, the failure of the American efforts to reach some result through the autonomy talks, even on the basis of a compromise.

President Carter cannot put pressure on Israeli Premier Menachem Begin, and Mr. Begin will not show any flexibility with Mr. Carter. He will try to deprive the negotiations of all meaning and to push them towards Zionist goals, which are to swallow the West Bank and Gaza Strip under the umbrella of Camp David -- according to his personal interpretation of the accords.

Israel has prepared for the Begin-Carter talks with a concentrated propaganda campaign stressing the failure of the Sadat-Carter talks which took place a week ago. The Israeli campaign also spoke of the limited possibilities for success in the negotiations, which betrays Israel's intention to let the negotiations fail and put the blame on President Sadat and Carter -- thus creating a gap which will give it the time to establish its occupation and seizure of Arab land. This means a return to the starting point in Mr. Sadat's submissive initiative.

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## West Bank residents protest Israeli brutality

TEL AVIV, April 15 (Agencies) -- Arab students in Ramallah in the occupied West Bank went on strike today and Arab leaders met to protest the Israeli military government's handling of recent protest demonstrations.

Some 200 students gathered in the town hall, shouted slogans deploring the Israeli occupation and accused the authorities of brutality in suppressing demonstrations in and around the town last week. Several students were wounded. At least seven were hospitalised and 41 were arrested. The Arab leaders charged that

troops have used excessive force in breaking up the student protests. Students at the Ramallah teachers' training college north of Jerusalem and at nearby Birzeit

## Islamic thinkers meet here on Jerusalem

AMMAN, April 15 (JNA) -- A number of Islamic scholars held a meeting on the status of Jerusalem here this afternoon, called by the Islamic Conference Organisation (ICO). During the meeting they reviewed the Zionist occupation authorities' attempts to seize Al

University demonstrated last week and blocked roads, burned tires and threw stones at cars.

A spokesman for the military government, Mr. Yishai Cohen,

claimed that the troops had used "acceptable force" to break up the protests. He warned that troops would again use force against future demonstrators if necessary.

The occupation authorities have announced that they will act according to the decisions of the Israeli's chief rabbi. These authorities are still carrying out digging and excavating operations around Al Aqsa Mosque and in its courtyards, causing the danger of collapse, the statement added.

The scholars announced at the end of the meeting that Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock are Islamic sanctuaries under the sovereignty of no other group or religion, adding that the Zionist designs to seize the Islamic holy places is a blatant challenge to the feelings of the Islamic nation.

They also decided to send cables to the Iraqi and Iranian presidents urging them to solve their problems peacefully.

## Amman-Damascus train running, Suheimat says

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN, April 15 -- Jordan's Hijaz Railway Directorate has not stopped its weekly train service to Damascus, contrary to local press reports, Minister of Transport Mr. Ali Suheimat told the Jordan Times tonight.

There has been no disruption of the regular schedule for the passenger train linking Amman and Damascus, despite the fact that the run is not profitable and despite the statement by the Syrian railway authorities that the

Amman-Damascus train could no longer pull into the Damascus station but would have to stop at the Qadam station, three kilometres outside the capital, Mr. Suheimat said.

According to the director of the railway directorate, Mr. Mohammad Raja Qusini, all such considerations to stop the run outside Damascus, and consequently to stop the run altogether, "have been postponed until further notice. There is nothing more to say."

On Sunday, the under-secretary of the Ministry of Transport left for talks in Damascus described by Mr. Suheimat as routine semi-monthly meetings between state transport and railway officials.

Al Rai's newspaper reported Monday that part of the under-secretary's talks would focus on continuing the Amman-Damascus run.

The run has not been economically practical for some time because it only carries passengers and not cargo on the six-hour trip. Travellers also prefer to travel by car to Damascus.

About two weeks ago Syrian railway officials said they would stop the Amman-Damascus run three kilometres outside Damascus because traffic at the train station was over congested and the run didn't generate enough revenue to warrant the diesel-powered train occupying time and space at the station.

The Syrians presented this proposal and Jordan's Hijaz Railway Directorate said it was prepared to suspend all runs to Damascus if the train was not allowed to enter the station. Under such conditions, Mr. Qusini told the Jordan Times last week, it was no longer practical to operate the run. But the railway company would continue with its other operations and wait until the \$1 billion Hijaz railway project gets underway to link Damascus with Medina through Jordan along the original turn-of-the-century route.

Until that project is completed, the transport minister said tonight, the Hijaz Railway Directorate may have to economise on

its operations, such as by staff reductions, if it is to maintain its line between Amman and Damascus.

For now it appears Jordanian transport and railway officials must wait until their Syrian counterparts decide whether or not to allow the train into the main station, which could involve a slight adjustment to the purchase price of a ticket.

## Polio causes concern in Gaza Strip

GAZA (Special) -- Persistent recurrence of attacks of poliomyelitis, despite preventive care, is causing concern to parents among Palestine refugees crowded in the Gaza Strip -- and to the United Nations officials responsible for health services in the area.

One of the most densely populated territories in the world, the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip -- measuring about 10 kilometres by 45 kilometres -- holds more than 300,000 Palestine refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), as well as tens of thousands of local inhabitants.

The latest polio casualties were a four-year-old boy from Nuseirat camp southwest of Gaza town, who died, and a 10-month-old girl from the nearby Maghazi camp, who now has a paralysed leg. Like other recent polio victims, both children had had some vaccine under the preventive programme which has been conducted for several years under the supervision of World Health Organization (WHO) medical staff working with UNRWA.

Ironically, the Palestine refugee population in the Gaza Strip is one of the most vaccinated groups in the world. The UNRWA/WHO programme provides for them to receive five anti-polio vaccine doses compared with the three considered sufficient in temperate zones.

The current anti-polio campaign is the result of experience during the years 1974-77, when 180 children suffered paralysis after polio attacks. Major outbreaks took place in 1974 and 1976 in the usual alternate-year pattern. Medical staff were already reaching a large proportion of the children with three doses of oral vaccine, but they decided to add two further doses to forestall an expected major outbreak in 1978, the next alternate year.

First results were encouraging: the feared polio wave did not appear in 1978. But unfortunately there were four more cases in 1979. And in 1980 there could be more young victims in the teeming Gaza Strip camps along the edge of the eastern Mediterranean.

Dr. Kamal Abdullah, UNRWA's field health officer in the Gaza Strip, says: "We think there is a wild virus circulating in the community in spite of intensive anti-polio precautions. There is hardly any other explanation. We are getting fresh supplies of virulent polio from the neighbouring countries, particularly in the summer when visitors come."

"Most of the cases in 1979 were not vaccinated fully, or not vaccinated at all, so we think that by reaching all those who do not come for the first dose, by home visits, we may be able to protect all our children from this catastrophic disease."

## Abu 'Ein's mother appeals to envoy

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN, April 15 -- Three Arab ambassadors here received visits from a Palestinian mother who appealed to them to support the cause of her son who is in prison in the United States awaiting extradition to Israel.

Mrs. Mariam Abu 'Ein spoke today with the ambassadors of Algeria, Iraq and Syria, asking them to urge their governments to support the Jordanian government's efforts to obtain the release of her 20-year old son, Ziad Abu 'Ein, the Jordan Times has learned.

Mr. Abu 'Ein has been held in a Chicago federal prison in the U.S. since August, when Israel sought his extradition in connection with the planting of an explosive device in Tiberias in May, 1979.

Last December a U.S. magistrate's court ruled that the offence he was sought for was not of a political character and thus extraditable. He lost an appeal against the decision which was heard by the Chicago District Court at the end of March.

On Sunday, Mrs. Abu 'Ein along with Ziad's wife of less than a year, Hiam Shihadeh, presented the U.S. ambassador to Jordan, Mr. Nicholas Veliotis, with a fact sheet listing points against the extradition of Ziad.

An embassy spokesman today called the visit a "private meeting" and said he could not comment on whether the embassy has officially exchanged information on the visit with the U.S. government. Yesterday, Ambassador Veliotis talked with Minister of

State Hassan Ibrahim about Abu 'Ein's case, but the meeting does not seem to have been precipitated by the earlier discussion with his mother and wife.

The embassy, the spokesman said, considers the case, a matter that is still under adjudication. It has no say in the matter. "We are willing to hear what people have to say," he described the embassy's line role.

Earlier this month, he had information the embassy received indicated that Mr. Abu 'Ein's detention for habeas corpus had been dismissed. The case now was appealed to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. The next last resort is the U.S. Supreme Court.

The spokesman said he had information on whether a statement made by West I mayors that Mr. Abu 'Ein was extradited to Israel under U.S.-Israeli extradition treaty because he is not an Israeli citizen was legally correct.

Tomorrow, Mrs. Abu 'Ein visit the United Arab Emirates ambassador to Jordan before returning to her home in Ramallah.

A friend of Mr. Abu 'Ein spoke with him recently on telephone said a few days ago Ziad -- who has been on a hunger strike since March 29 in protest against the district court decision -- began ingesting such as fruit juices. Previous had drunk only water with a bit of sugar. He was transferred to a prison hospital about ten days ago because of his deteriorating health.

## U.N. trade centre to provide assistance to Arab merchants

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN, April 15 -- The Executive Director of the United Nations International Trade Centre (ITC), Dr. P.C. Alexander, left here today after signing an agreement with the Arab League's Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) for cooperation and technical assistance in trade and marketing.

The agreement, signed yesterday, is the second signed by the CAEU with a U.N. agency. It provides for the exchange of information to help Arab exporters and importers seek better bargains and use better marketing techniques. Such information will include country-by-country tariffs structures and costs of local production and marketing costs in each country, such as transportation expenses.

Another major objective of the accord is to help promote trade between the developing and industrialised countries.

Industrialised countries. This, the ITC could undertake agreement send experts in countries and brief those who in the field on the latest methods and methods of national trade. Or Arab already in the trade field, as those working in a mini-trade, could receive special training in their specialisation similar institution in a developing country.

To obviate such sojourn abroad, the ITC is studying feasibility of setting up a trade centre in the Middle East.

The five-year accord was signed by the CAEU's Secretary General, Dr. Fakhri Qadi and by Dr. Alexander. Some developing countries have similar agreements with the including six Arab states.

While here, Dr. Alexander with the Minister of Industry, Trade, Mr. Ali Nassir, reviewed the ITC's efforts to promote trade between developing and industrialised countries.

## Lebanese interior decorator displays attractive collages at French Centre

By Fawzia Mai Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN, April 15 -- An unusually well-presented and attractive exhibition of collages by the well-known Lebanese interior decorator Alecco Saab opened this afternoon at the French Cultural Centre. Equally attractive are the prices of the items on show, which are easily within reach.

Although the prices of these glittering designs range between JD 12 and JD 65, the artistic value of the collages is by no means inferior to that of the usual exhibits priced much higher. The artist, explores a few ideas and by changing the shapes, arrangements and colours, comes up with a large number (50) of neatly arranged collages.

The overall design is simple, a square or rectangle -- very rarely a circle or oval -- lined with silver or gold paper. Very simple shapes with harmonious colours are then superimposed. A few are set on

white background paper. Perhaps the artist, who is working with Alla, the Royal Jordanian Airline, as an adviser on decor, may have been influenced by Alla's red and gold colours.

One of his themes is the interplay of lines and waves. The results vary from three lines running more or less horizontally across a golden field to a vertical composition of lines and curves in orange browns that suggest the texture of bark. Sometimes, an original touch is added by lines cut by knife across the glittering metallic paper. Other variations are leaf-like shapes formed by curves facing each other, and formations of straight lines which rise into the shapes of platforms and then smooth themselves out into straight lines again, producing diverse impressions, such as that of a brick wall.

Another idea is the superimposition of translucent coloured bands over designs formed by patches with ragged edges. The patches are arranged into rosettes,

or in oblique bands suggesting falling leaves, or simply in eye-pleasing patterns. The bands are thickly or thinly spaced, sometimes divided into sections of varying colours. These translucent lines create an attractive effect, sometimes similar to that of open blinds on a window.

A number of interesting items fall in neither of these two categories. There is for instance the triangle arrangement, not too successful where mountain peaks, upside down and right-side up, slide into each other, as sharp teeth would. Two interesting creations are two rectangles, the first enclosing rows of skewed horizontal straight lines with little square at the end of each line, as

though weighing it down, giving the impression of precarious balance. In the second rectangle the lines have tumbled down. Little sticks sprouting out of a horizontal stand form an original collage. Another original one is a field full of what looks like periscopes.

Alecco Saab, who was born in 1931, studied at the school of Decorative Arts in Paris. Besides working as an adviser on decor to Alla, Mr. Saab also runs two interior design offices in Beirut and Amman. Although he has participated in numerous exhibitions in Beirut and has founded an art gallery, the present exhibition is his first in Amman.

The exhibition runs until April 18.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

Goya Exhibition

The Haya Arts Centre and the Spanish Cultural Centre present an exhibition of Canvas copies of paintings by Goya at the Haya Arts Centre Theatre. The exhibition continues until April 17.

Children's Art Exhibition

An exhibition of paintings by three Jordanian teenagers is on display at the Ghazi Arabiyat Hall at the Haya Arts Centre until April 17. The young artists are Christine Naser, Nasri Juha and Shuruk Hamdan.

Collage Exhibition

The French Cultural Centre presents an exhibition of collages by Alecco Saab. The exhibition continues until April 18.

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## THIRD EDUCATION PROJECT MOBILS SCHOOLS BUILDING MAINTENANCE UNITS. LOAN NO. 1781 / JO

The government of Jordan has received a loan from the World Bank.

The project will comprise equipment for mobile maintenance units. Each unit will be self-propelled and built on a truck chassis and is to be equipped for carpentry, smithery, electrical, plumbing work and welding. Bid documents for the units will include complete details and will be issued April 15, 1980. The bid closing date will be June 30, 1980. Bid documents are available at nonrefundable sum JD. 3,000 or U.S. \$10 or equivalent currency.

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# Economic News Briefs

## U.S. cites north-south negotiation topics

UNITED NATIONS, April 15 (Agencies) — U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Donald McHenry says the international community should not wait until global negotiations on north-south economic issues resume next year to deal with the issue of recycling balance of payments surpluses amassed by the oil-producing nations.

Stating the U.S. position before the U.N. "committee of the whole," Mr. McHenry cited three other significant topics the U.S. would like to see on the 1981 negotiations agenda. These are worldwide trade pledges to resist protectionist pressures and to promote positive adjustment: assistance for exploration and development of energy resources in energy deficient countries, and improved world food security by fulfilling national targets of the food aid convention, backing those commitments with food aid reserves and improving food storage and distribution in developing nations.

"We believe there is an emerging international consensus which will permit successful work on these four important topics," he said. "Moreover, it is the view of my government that the international community cannot await the advent of global negotiations in 1981 to deal with the recycling issue."

## Shipping industry recovers from hardships

LONDON, April 15 (R) — The world's shipbuilders showed signs of recovery last year from an economic crisis in the industry with a gradual and sustained build-up, Lloyd's Register of Shipping reported today.

In his annual review, Chairman Robert Huskisson said there were welcome indications the crisis had passed its peak. "There was continuing hardship in most sectors, but while for many companies in our industry the situation remains critical, most are weathering the storm more successfully than seemed possible at this time last year," he stated.

Freight rates crept up here and there while new orders for ships exceeded expectations in 1979 to reach 17 million gross tons, double the total for 1978 and the best year since 1974. During last year the world merchant fleet topped 413 million gross tons.

The Lloyd's report added that these figures were augmented by

the optimism being expressed about future trading prospects in certain sectors of the shipping industry, particularly in the Far East which was enjoying a marked resurgence in business and ordering a significant quantity of new tonnage.

In addition, Greek and Scandinavian interests had been ordering some large chemical carriers in Yugoslavian yards, Lloyd's stated.

The report said there had also been a drastic cut in the number of tankers laid up, although this situation could change overnight with any violent increasing in oil prices.

In his statement, Mr. Huskisson said the optimism he now felt for the shipping industry must be tempered by a great deal of caution because of developments in Iran and the Soviet Union's military involvement in Afghanistan. "Such events occurring in an area which generates two-thirds of the oil supply of Western nations can only be regarded with the utmost gravity," he stated.

But Mr. Huskisson said the events in the Middle East could have positive results in galvanizing Western economies, altering the Western nations to their vulnerability and to the sharpness of the competition now being presented by the socialist states, and could finally bring home to consumers the urgent need for energy conservation and the need to seek alternatives.

## Esso North Sea oil profits £506m

LONDON, April 15 (R) — Esso Petroleum, the U.S. Exxon corporation's wholly-owned British subsidiary, today announced 1979 pre-tax profits which were nearly 12 times those for 1978. Esso said pre-tax 1979 profits were £506.66 million (\$1,114.60 million) compared with £43.22 million (\$95 million) in 1978.

The company said the results showed that profits had at last begun to reward major investment by Esso on its British North Sea fields during the past five years. Esso said that during 1979 alone it spent £340 million (\$750 million) seeking and developing oil and gas resources in the North Sea.

It planned to spend £1.4 billion (\$3.08 billion) more to complete its existing offshore projects and added that, to support such high levels of capital investment, it would need to achieve profits at 1979 levels or higher. Offshore investments would run at around £350 million sterling (\$770 million) a year, it said.

## Gold falls below \$500

LONDON, April 15 (R) — The dollar rose sharply on world foreign exchange markets today and the price of gold tumbled below \$500 an ounce. The possibility that West European nations might join the United States in trade sanctions against Iran cited by dealers as one reason for the dollar's strength.

Any future reduction in oil supplies as a result of the situation in Iran is seen likely to hurt Europe more than the United States, the dealers said. But a basic factor behind the dollar's strength is still the record high interest rates in American banks, making the dollar attractive to investors.

Speculation that interest rates might soon be coming down brought a halt to the dollar's rise

recently and it went into decline. Its rise today was seen partly as a market reaction against the decline. Dealers also reported that the markets now appear to feel that the expected decrease in U.S. interest rates will be slow in developing.

Gold traded at around \$495 an ounce on the London bullion market, down from yesterday's level of about \$524 an ounce.

Dealers said high U.S. interest rates continued to draw attention away from gold, and trading on main bullion markets was reported slack. But gold is still above its lowest point this year, when it fell to 460.50 an ounce on March 18 after President Carter's anti-inflation package boosted the dollar.

## Turkey to get Western aid

PARIS, April 15 (R) — A group of Western countries today pledged aid to Turkey worth \$1.16 billion or less than half what Ankara says it needs this year. A spokesman for the 24-nation Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said final conditions for much of the package would need to be worked out between Turkey and individual donors.

Mr. Turgut Ozal, under-secretary to the Turkish prime minister, told newsmen his country needed about \$3 billion in aid this year and he hoped oil producing countries, including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, would make up the difference.

In addition to the OECD pledge, the World Bank has

granted \$340 million in aid and project loans for this year with a further \$220 million awaiting approval by its board. The International Monetary Fund has granted about \$300 million this year.

Mr. Ozal said Turkey's economy had shown marked signs of improvement since the new government's economic programme was introduced in January. There had been notable decrease in the inflation rate which had been running at an annual level of 80 per cent at the end of 1979, he said.

Mr. Ozal also said he hoped a meeting would take place in May to discuss postponing Turkey's foreign debt which was estimated earlier this year at about \$14 billion.

## LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON, April 15 (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at the close of trading on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets today.

One sterling	2.185/75	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1863/66	Canadian dollar
	1.9025/35	West German marks
	2.0775/95	Dutch guilders
	1.7845/65	Swiss francs
	30.49/54	Belgian francs
	4.3850/3900	French francs
	252.90/253.10	Japanese yen
	4.4015/30	Swedish crowns
One ounce of gold	5.0980/1010	Norwegian crowns
	495.00/499.00	U.S. dollars

## LONDON STOCK MARKET

LONDON, April 15 (R) — The market closed mixed with an easier bias after a quiet session, dealers said. At 1500 the FT index was down 0.6 at 437.6.

Gold shares ended as much as \$3 down in line with the weaker bullion price. Government bonds showed falls stretching to a point in technical reaction to recent gains. Oils and industrials generally showed small movements either way but banks were mostly firmer.

Standard Chartered Bank fell 15p after results while figures prompted losses in Rowntree Mackintosh and Bank of Scotland of 4p and 2p respectively. Rugby Portland, which announced results and a rights issue, ended 2p lower but Ready Mixed Concrete added 3p after figures.

Glaxo lost 10p on further consideration of yesterday's results while BP finished 10p down on continuing anxieties over the trading outlook. Guthrie Corp. ended 1½ weaker at £8½, continuing its recent volatility.

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## E. African leaders agree to promote regional trade

MOMBASA, Kenya, April 15 (R) -- Four East African presidents have agreed to collaborate in promoting trade in their region and in helping Uganda reintegrate itself into regional affairs a year after the overthrow of dictator Idi Amin.

A joint communique released today, after a summit meeting at this Indian Ocean port yesterday between President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, President Godfrey Binaisa of Uganda, President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, said the four had "exchanged views and reached understanding on a number of matters concerning regional cooperation."

It said the trade ministers of the four countries would meet soon to draw up detailed plans for promoting commercial ties.

A final settlement of the affairs of the defunct East African Community (EAC), which linked

Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in a transport and economic union until it collapsed in acrimony three years ago, would be sought at a meeting with a mediator appointed by the World Bank in Arusha, Tanzania on May 7.

The communique said the presidents expressed a strong desire to strengthen understanding between their peoples and agreed that their respective national news media should ensure that this was not jeopardised.

The presidents agreed that their next summit would be held in the Ugandan capital of Kampala, where they noted with satisfaction

that the security situation had improved following the war in which Field Marshal Amin was toppled by the Tanzanian army and Ugandan exile guerrillas a year ago.

At a state banquet following the three-hour summit, President Nimeiri, whose country afforded refuge to tens of thousands of former members of Idi Amin's army when they fled before the Tanzanian advance, pledged to help Uganda's recovery from the war and said Uganda's problems would be solved if all Ugandans were loyal to the Leadership of President Binaisa.

Diplomats in the Kenyan capital said the Mombasa summit appeared to have been more successful than any earlier one aimed at rebuilding trade and cooperation in East Africa following the demise of the EAC.

They noted however that the joint communique made no mention of the closed border between Tanzania and Kenya, which was closed by Tanzania as the EAC broke up.



Godfrey Binaisa

## Extremists claim responsibility Rockets damage Paris government buildings

PARIS, April 15 (R) -- A three-man commando armed with a bazooka fired rockets at government buildings in central Paris today, and the "Direct Action" extremist group claimed responsibility.

Police said rockets were pumped into two blocks housing Transport Ministry offices shortly after dawn. Almost simultaneously, a powerful blast rocked a computer centre used by the ministry to regulate holiday traffic. All three buildings were damaged, but no-one was hurt in the attacks, which occurred shortly before cleaning staff were due to come on duty.

An anonymous caller telephoned a French news agency to claim responsibility for the acts on behalf of "Direct Action," charged two weeks ago with bomb attacks, attempted murder and subversion.

Police said that, from eyewitness accounts of the rocket attacks on the ministry buildings close to the River Seine, the weapon used appeared to be a Soviet-made bazooka.

"Direct Action," are believed to have carried out a long series of assaults on French public buildings in recent months, including one in March on the office of Cooperation Minister Robert Galley. But police said it was the first time that such a sophisticated weapon had been used.

## Liberia's military government orders all off-duty soldiers back to barracks

MONROVIA, April 15 (R) -- Liberia's military government has ordered all off-duty soldiers back to their barracks in a further effort to restore confidence and get life back to normal in Monrovia following Saturday's coup.

An official announcement on Radio Liberia last night said any soldiers who were not present at today's morning roll-call would be considered absent without leave.

Soldiers roaming the streets in search of members of the deposed administration of President William Tolbert had been accused of being involved in looting following the coup.

But despite several broadcast appeals and the assurance that military patrols were now guarding the streets, most businesses remained closed today for fear of further looting raids.

The radio also appealed to the unemployed -- said by the new head of state, Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe, to outnumber those with work -- to stay off the streets. Those with jobs should return to work, the radio said.

The coup appears to have been generally well received. New regional superintendents appointed by the government have taken up their posts and have reported no resistance in the country, informed sources said.

There has so far been no news of the outcome of the first trials yesterday by a six-man military tribunal of Tolbert administration officials accused of corruption, high treason and violation of civil and human rights.

It is still not known how many officials have been arrested but the radio said last night that 20 more had been caught.

The radio appealed today for the elder son of President Tolbert, who was killed in the coup, to surrender to the new authorities. Earlier unconfirmed reports had said that Mr. Benedict Tolbert had been beheaded in the coup.

Sergeant Doe yesterday said Liberia would seek to maintain and develop friendship with foreign investors and would do its best to maintain and develop relations with all peace-loving countries.

He added that the right to private property and "the fruits of honest labour" would be respected and the past would be

allowed to fade into history. "There will be no witch-hunting. It is our responsibility to build a new society for the benefit of all our people. We call on our foreign friends to assist us in this respect."

Citing the grievances which led to Saturday's coup, Sergeant Doe said the former government had failed to respond to the wishes of the country's poor.

"There has been an incomparable corruption that we can see all around us in the form of conflicts of interest, the selling of influence, the use of official positions for private gain and other forms of corruption," he said.

"There were illegal detentions, illegal searches and seizures, even convictions without trial."

'Kramer vs. Kramer' wins five Hollywood awards Oscars

LOS ANGELES, April 15 (R) -- Dustin Hoffman, nominated four times but never before a winner, won a Hollywood Oscar for best actor last night for his role as a father in "Kramer vs. Kramer," which swept the field with five awards.

Sally Field won the best actress award for her role as a tough textile worker who helped bring a trade union into a mill in the U.S. South in "Norma Rae."

In accepting his Oscar before a star-studded audience, the 42-year-old Mr. Hoffman, who has been critical of acting awards in the past, declared: "I am here with mixed feelings. I refuse to believe I beat Jack Lemmon, I beat Al Pacino, I beat Peter Sellers -- among the actors nominated for his award."

As his mother sobbed quietly in the audience, the short, intense Mr. Hoffman added solemnly: "I would like to thank my parents for not practising birth control."

He had been previously nominated as best actor for his roles in "The Graduate," "Midnight Cowboy" and "Lenny."

The film "Kramer vs. Kramer," a powerful portrait of a father, played by Mr. Hoffman, fighting to retain custody of his young son, was also declared the best picture of the year.

Meryl Streep, 31, who played the wife who left Mr. Hoffman for a life of her own and then tried to regain custody of her son, won the Oscar for best supporting actress after only three years of acting.

Robert Benton won two Oscars -- awarded by 3,604 members of the film industry who make up the academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences -- for directing and also for adapting the screenplay for "Kramer vs. Kramer."

Miss Field, 34, warned as she received her award: "I am going to

wanted a lawyer. "I have no money, but if anyone is willing to represent me, I have no objection," he said.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported that police had arrested five people in Baroda, including the deputy mayor, in connection with the case.

Baroda Police Chief M.N. Mehta said the arrests were made at the request of the Delhi police.

Former premier Charan Singh, who escaped an assassination attempt 22 months ago, said, "Violence on political leaders is bound to create chaos in the country... and hit at the very roots of democracy."

Japan's spring labour offensive threatens millions of commuters

TOKYO, April 15 (R) -- Japan's annual spring labour offensive, or "Shunto," opens tomorrow with strikes which could hit nearly 40 million commuters.

Although last-minute mediation talks continued today, there was no sign of a settlement which would avert three days of strikes and walkouts by public sector workers.

The workers are seeking pay increases of ten per cent. Their employers have offered 4.4 per cent.

Employees of the Japan National Railways (JNR), underground railways and bus lines are expected to strike tomorrow and the Transport Ministry said nearly 40 million travellers would be affected.

Worst hit will be Tokyo. Government officials and businessmen

## U.S. agrees to accept 3,500 Cubans from Peru's embassy

WASHINGTON, April 15 (R) -- President Carter will allow 3,500 Cubans who have sought asylum in the Peruvian embassy in Havana to enter the United States, the White House announced yesterday. Presidential Press Secretary Jody Powell said Mr. Carter had made his decision on humanitarian grounds and was calling on other countries to do their part.

An estimated 10,000 Cubans have been jammed in the Peruvian embassy in Havana for several days seeking asylum.

Mr. Powell said the president was deeply concerned for the safety and freedom of the Cubans. He said the United States fully supported the efforts of the five Andean Pact countries -- Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela -- to bring about a quick, humanitarian solution to the problem.

The White House welcomed Costa Rica's offer to serve as a staging area for the Cubans before they left for other countries.

"The United States calls on other nations in the region and elsewhere to make their own contributions without delay," a White House state-

ment said. "This humanitarian crisis requires an immediate international response."

Mr. Powell said the Cuban government had failed to cooperate in a reasonable fashion with the Peruvian Government or with international organisations attempting to provide humanitarian assistance. He said Cuba had stated it would permit the refugees to leave but no planes had left yet for Costa Rica. Statements made by the Havana government that many of the refugees were criminals ought to be rejected without corroborating evidence, Mr. Powell said.

The White House statement called on the Cuban Government "to cooperate with Peru and international organisations to facilitate the safe and peaceful exit of the Cubans."

In accepting the 3,500 Cuban refugees, the United States would give first priority to released political prisoners, second to members of families already in this country, and third to those seeking political asylum, Mr. Powell said.

Since 1958, the United States has accepted 800,000 Cuban refugees. Most of them live in Florida.

## NATO allies 'must' boost defence effort in case U.S. forces diverted

BRUSSELS, April 15 (R) -- The United States told its European NATO allies yesterday they must boost their defence effort because some of the U.S. forces earmarked for reinforcing Europe could be diverted to the Indian Ocean region.

The U.S. wants the NATO states to accelerate their programme to increase ammunition stocks, expand their trained reservist forces and make more transport planes available to help airlift U.S. reinforcements to Europe, NATO sources said.

But the U.S. does not contemplate reducing its troops at present stationed in Western Europe, the sources said.

The initial response of the allies has been encouraging for Washington, U.S. diplomatic sources said.

U.S. Under-Secretary of Defence Robert Komer attended a high-level defence planning committee meeting yesterday to discuss the strategic East-West balance following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

According to the sources, the U.S. told its allies that it had to move one of its aircraft carriers from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean. Washington expects the threat in that area to be of long duration, they said.

U.S. marine amphibious units at present in the Mediterranean will

also probably have to switch periodically to the Indian Ocean, the U.S. said.

It told its allies that, in an emergency, aircraft and troops earmarked for quick reinforcement of Europe might also have to be diverted to that area.

The American call for greater efforts by the allies will be studied by the alliance's military authorities and reviewed by NATO ministers later this year.

Top of the list is an increase in ammunition reserves. The U.S. considers that Western European stocks are below the levels needed to sustain a defence until U.S. reserves arrive.

A new factor now is that Washington might have to divert some ammunition to the Indian Ocean area. The U.S. says Western Europe should increase its ammunition stock to hedge against this possibility, the sources said.

West Germany has already planned additional purchases.

Washington would also like its allies to plan the use of civilian wide-body aircraft to help rush U.S. troops to Europe if a crisis there coincided with one in the Gulf.

This would involve reinforcing the aircraft floors so that they could carry heavy equipment, and adding equipment for loading and unloading, NATO experts said.

On the other priority, of expanding their reserves, the sources said most West European countries have many reservists, but they are not incorporated and trained in units.

## Japan's spring labour offensive threatens millions of commuters

TOKYO, April 15 (R) -- Japan's annual spring labour offensive, or "Shunto," opens tomorrow with strikes which could hit nearly 40 million commuters.

Although last-minute mediation talks continued today, there was no sign of a settlement which would avert three days of strikes and walkouts by public sector workers.

The workers are seeking pay increases of ten per cent. Their employers have offered 4.4 per cent.

Employees of the Japan National Railways (JNR), underground railways and bus lines are expected to strike tomorrow and the Transport Ministry said nearly 40 million travellers would be affected.

Worst hit will be Tokyo. Government officials and businessmen

were moving into hotels, while some firms offered mattresses and blankets to workers who wanted to sleep at the office.

Traffic in city centres is expected to be clogged by commuters driving in from the suburbs.

Coinciding with the transport stoppages will be walkouts by post office workers, teachers and hospital and municipal employees.

The walkouts will vary in length from 30 minutes to a full day.

The government has called on rail workers and employees of other government agencies to call off their action. It has promised stern action against any workers who take part in illegal strikes.

Japanese law prohibits strikes by government employees and public corporation workers.

## World News Briefs

LONDON, April 15 (R) -- Soviet spy planes have increased their reconnaissance flights down Britain's east coast by 25 per cent during the last 12 months, officials said today. They reported that British fighters had on 250 occasions intercepted giant Russian aircraft carrying electronic spy equipment but at no time had Soviet planes penetrated British air space. "They are just testing us -- timing our reaction. We put a fighter on their wings and they usually turn for home," an official said. The disclosure coincided with the beginning of a 36-hour NATO exercise to test Britain's air defences. Codenamed "Elder Forest 80," the exercise involves warplanes from eight NATO countries launching 800 simulated attacks on air installations.

SYDNEY, April 15 (R) -- Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser today made a personal appeal to all Australian Olympic Federation (AOF) delegates to back his call for a boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games. He sent signed telegrams to each of the delegates, who are due to vote on whether to send a team to Moscow at a meeting next Saturday. Two days ago, AOF President Syd Grange said the United States Olympic Committee's decision not to send a team to Moscow in protest against the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan would not affect the Australian decision. Today, Mr. Grange said the telegrams confirmed the government's previous desire not to send a team.

TOKYO, April 15 (R) -- The population of Tokyo was 11,422,630 on Jan. 1 this year, the metropolitan administration announced today. It was 8,226 fewer than a year ago, the first decline in the capital's population since 1952.

BANGKOK, April 15 (R) -- Thailand's television screens will be blank during peak viewing hours and nightclubs will remain shut until 9:00 p.m. under a three-month energy conservation period announced by the government last week. The cuts are designed to overcome a hydro-electricity crisis caused by widespread drought. The government has set stiff fines or jail sentences for convicted violators of some compulsory measures. All television stations will go off the air for one-and-a-half hours from 6:30 each evening and nightclubs, bars and floodlit tennis courts will not be permitted to open before 9:00 p.m. Some factory machinery will be required to close down during peak evening consumption hours. One spin-off of the measures has been a special three-month birth control campaign launched by Thai family planners in case the evening television blackout leads to a spate of pregnancies. Free vasectomies are on offer to men under a \$350,000 programme during the energy saving period.

WASHINGTON, April 15 (AP) -- The U.S. Agriculture Department said yesterday it had bought an additional 94.4 million bushels of wheat that originally was intended for the Soviet Union, all of it directly from farmers. Officials said the government plans no further purchases of wheat at the present time. President Carter suspended further deliveries of U.S. grain to the Soviet Union on Jan. 4 in response to its intervention in Afghanistan.

NEW YORK, April 15 (R) -- Norman Mailer, long a controversial figure in American literature, has won the 1980 Pulitzer Prize for fiction for his book "The Executioner's Song" -- a work many critics claim is not fiction at all. "The Executioner's Song" is a 1,000-page inquiry into the short, unhappy life of Gary Gilmore, whose death by firing squad two years ago was the first execution in the United States in a decade. Although billed by Mr. Mailer as a novel, all the characters in the book are real and based on extensive interviews with those involved with Mr. Gilmore.

## China launches fresh assault on wall posters

PEKING, April 15 (R) -- The official People's Daily today launched a front page assault on the right to put up wall posters, preparing the ground for their formal abolition later this year.

The Communist Party newspaper reported that the standing committee of China's parliament had rubber-stamped a proposal made by the Central Committee of the party six weeks ago to strike the right to put them up from the constitution.

It said the standing committee, meeting here this week, had decided to put the proposal as a bill to the next full session of the parliament, the National People's Congress (NPC).

Diplomatic sources said the next sitting, the third plenum of the fifth NPC, was expected to be held this summer. The NPC always approves Communist Party proposals.

The right to put up wall posters was one of the so-called "four great freedoms" enshrined in the Chinese constitution before Chairman Mao Tse-tung's death in 1976, and readopted by the parliament in March 1978.

But hardly any have been put up since the closure of Peking democracy wall four months ago and the arrest of dissident leader Wei Jingsheng and others.

A banner headline in the People's Daily today said the abolition of the offending clause in the constitution "conformed with the wishes of the whole nation."

The party newspaper quoted Mr. Yang Xiuqiang, vice-chairman of the committee's legal commission, as saying the revised constitution would still permit freedom of speech, correspondence, procession, demonstration and the right to strike.

But the "four greats" clause allowing "the right to speak freely, air views fully, hold great debates and write big character posters" would be struck out.

Mr. Yang said the four greats had prevented citizens from enjoying their democratic right and had provided a loophole in law for a small number of "people" to attack the proletarian dictatorship and to try to destroy the leadership of the Communist Party.

## World Bank, China complete 'extremely constructive' talks

PEKING, April 15 (R) -- World Bank President Robert McNamara said today he had just completed five days of extremely constructive talks with Chinese leaders on Peking's future membership in his organisation.

China's seat at the World Bank, which makes low-cost loans to developing countries, is currently held by Taiwan.

Mr. McNamara told Reuters before he left for Canton he had had talks with a number of Chinese leaders including Senior Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping, Vice-Premier Gu Mu, and top Bank of China officials.

"Universally, the discussions were from our point of view extremely constructive and very

successful," he said. "I leave with the feeling that the visit was very productive."

"We were of course interested in the development priorities of the People's Republic of China and ways in which the bank may be of possible assistance," Mr. McNamara said. He added he had described the bank's operating procedures to the Chinese in full.

A World Bank official with him said substantial progress had been made during the talks on "the changing of representation" from Taiwan to Peking. But both men declined to comment on when Peking would be able to join, or exactly how the question of Taiwan's representation would be solved.

Membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is a prerequisite for joining the World Bank, which is properly known as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Together the two bodies, linked with the United Nations, form the world's leading repositories of cheap credit.

Mr. McNamara's visit closely followed one by an eight-man mission from the IMF, led by Mr. Tun Tun, director of the fund's Asian department.

Chinese Vice-Premier Yu Qitui said in Japan recently China needed international cooperation in order to modernise and wanted to join the IMF this year.



Robert McNamara

## The state of the Soviet economy

By Jeffrey Antevil

WASHINGTON -- In 1959, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev told a Communist Party congress that his country would surpass the United States economically by 1980. Today that goal is nowhere in sight. In fact, U.S. officials say, the Soviet economy faces an extended period of decline which could create serious political pressures on the ageing Kremlin leadership.

But the same officials, including researchers and Soviet specialists in the State Department, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Library of Congress, caution that their black forecasts must be kept in perspective.

The predicted Soviet economic growth rate in the next decade or so, while falling far short of consumer expectations and continuing to decline, still represents a respectable performance by current Western standards and there is no immediate prospect of collapse.

In many respects, 1980 could be a crucial year for the Soviet economy, officials said.

They cited the following predicted or potential developments which could have a decisive impact on Soviet prospects:

— The death or retirement of the ailing 73-year-old leader Mr. Leonid Brezhnev, beginning a succession period marked by uncertainty if not outright disarray in Soviet domestic and foreign policies.

— Conclusion of the latest five-year economic plan, with targets which have not been met even though they were secretly scaled down, and adoption of a new plan to begin next January.

— The apparent collapse of the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) and other arms control negotiations in the aftermath of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, putting pressure on the Kremlin for increases in military spending.

— Declining trends in Soviet oil production and the size of the labour force, both of which may fall to zero growth during 1980.

What this adds up to, one State Department official said, is a period of tremendous strain in the Soviet economy as planners find it increasingly difficult to balance competing demands for more investment in heavy industrial

production, defence and consumer goods.

But there is little expectation among U.S. officials of a significant change in Soviet priorities.

"Defence and internal security will continue to receive first cut under any circumstances," one official said. "The worse things get (in terms of new economic difficulties and possible domestic discontent) the more important those things become."

The real question, officials said, is whether Kremlin leaders will seek to resolve the dilemma of increasing demands and declining resources by adopting more liberal incentives of the market economy type, or by returning to the repressive measures of Stalinist times.

A third possibility which many U.S. specialists think Soviet leaders will adopt barring a major economic or military catastrophe is a continuation of the present policy of "muddling through."

But they said it remained to be seen whether tinkering with a basically inefficient system would work in the changed circumstances of the 1980s.

Among Soviet economic developments forecast by U.S. officials by the mid-1980s are con-

tinued decline in industrial production and a shift from the status of an import-export country to that of an importer forced to spend hard-earned foreign currency to meet rising oil prices.

Industrial production, which declined from a six per cent growth rate in the 1950s to five per cent in the 1960s, was down to 3.4 per cent last year. The latest five-year plan called for a 5.8 per cent growth rate.

The CIA forecasts that Soviet production will grow at a rate of only 2.5 per cent during the 1980s. The Soviet Union is still the world's largest oil producer. But U.S. officials said production will level out this year and then begin a steady decline.

If production has dropped to about ten million barrels a day by the mid-1980s, as these officials expect, the Soviet Union will be able to meet its own needs but will have to buy abroad almost all the oil it now supplies to other communist countries.

The picture in agriculture looks a little brighter despite the post-Afghanistan U.S. grain embargo, but only in comparison with the disastrous performance last year.

U.S. Agriculture Department analysts expect Soviet grain production to approach the 1978

record of 237 million tonnes after a 1979 crop of 179 million tonnes the lowest in four years.

To offset the shortfall caused by President Carter's cancellation of planned shipments of 17 million tonnes of grain, officials said Moscow would have to cut into substantial reserves and buy from other countries such as Brazil and Argentina.

Even so, the Soviet Union will be forced to slaughter some of its livestock herds it had hoped rebuild by feeding them with U.S. grain.

That means the official goal of boosting meat production by 2 per cent a year through 1985 is not to be met, U.S. analysts said.

But a State Department official said Soviet economic problems look serious mainly when compared with the promises of Khrushchev and the rising expectations of Soviet consumers.

After all, he said, while Soviet production might now steady rather than increasing relation to demand, this was better than the record in the United States, where the ratio was getting worse.

He added that the Soviet economists who were talking about a slowdown in Soviet growth were predicting an actual decline or recession in the United States.

U.S. Agriculture Department analysts expect Soviet grain production to approach the 1978

REUTERS

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